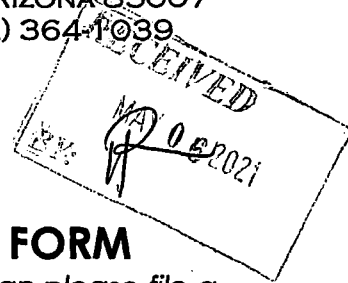


ARIZONA STATE VETERINARY MEDICAL EXAMINING BOARD
1740 W. ADAMS ST., SUITE 4600, PHOENIX, ARIZONA 85007
PHONE (602) 364-1PET (1738) FAX (602) 364-1039
VETBOARD.AZ.GOV



COMPLAINT INVESTIGATION FORM

If there is an issue with more than one veterinarian please file a separate Complaint Investigation Form for each veterinarian

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: MAY 6, 2021 Case Number: 21-136

A. THIS COMPLAINT IS FILED AGAINST THE FOLLOWING:

Name of Veterinarian/CVT: DR. Neil Farrington
Premise Name: Catalina Animal Hospital, LLC
Premise Address: 9023 N 35th AVE
City: Phoenix State: AZ Zip Code: 85051
Telephone: 602-269-8969

B. INFORMATION REGARDING THE INDIVIDUAL FILING COMPLAINT*:

Name: Darlene Lovitt - Bonnie Martin
Address: [REDACTED]
City: [REDACTED] State: [REDACTED] Zip Code: [REDACTED]
Home Telephone: [REDACTED] Cell Telephone: SAME

*STATE LAW REQUIRES WE HAVE TO DISCLOSE YOUR NAME UNLESS WE CAN SHOW THAT DISCLOSURE WILL RESULT IN SUBSTANTIAL HARM TO YOU, SOMEONE ELSE OR THE PUBLIC PER A.R.S. § 41-1010. IF YOU HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE THAT SUBSTANTIAL HARM WILL RESULT IN DISCLOSURE OF YOUR NAME PLEASE PROVIDE COPIES OF RESTRAINING ORDERS OR OTHER DOCUMENTATION.

C. PATIENT INFORMATION (1):

Name: BOTTIE
Breed/Species: Chihuahua smooth
Age: 12 Sex: male Color: brown

PATIENT INFORMATION (2):

Name: _____
Breed/Species: _____
Age: _____ Sex: _____ Color: _____

D. VETERINARIANS WHO HAVE PROVIDED CARE TO THIS PET FOR THIS ISSUE:

Please provide the name, address and phone number for each veterinarian.

Dr. Neil Farrington and staff
602-269-8969
9023 N 35th AVE
Phoenix AZ
85051

E. WITNESS INFORMATION:

Please provide the name, address and phone number of each witness that has direct knowledge regarding this case.

Dr. Neil Farrington and staff
9023 N 35th Ave Phoenix AZ 85051
602-269-8969

Darlene Lovitt, Bonnie Martin and Family Friends

Attestation of Person Requesting Investigation

By signing this form, I declare that the information contained herein is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. Further, I authorize the release of any and all medical records or information necessary to complete the investigation of this case.

Signature: Darlene Lovitt - Bonnie Martin

Date: 04-08-2021

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN;

My NAME IS DARLENE LOVITT AND THIS LETTER IS AN EXPLANATION OF MY EXPERIENCE WITH CATALINA ANIMAL HOSPITAL.

ME AND MY SISTER BONNIE TOOK OUR DOG ~~BOOTY~~ TO THE CATALINA ANIMAL HOSPITAL BECAUSE HE WAS HAVING A PROBLEM WITH HIS BOWEL MOVEMENTS. HE COULDN'T POOP. WHILE WE WERE IN THE WAITING ROOM THE RECEPTIONIST BROUGHT US THE PAPERWORK AND TOLD US IT WAS \$106⁰⁰ FOR THE EXAMINATION. SO I LEFT TO GO GET THE CASH. THEY CAME AND GOT BOOTY BUT WOULDN'T LET BONNIE GO BACK WITH HIM TO BE EXAMINED. BONNIE SAID AFTER ABOUT 5 MINUTES SHE HEARD BOOTY CRYING AND HOLLERING. SO SHE WENT BACK IN THE ROOM, BUT THEY TOLD HER TO GET OUT AND SHOWED HER THE WAY OUT. WHEN I GOT BACK WITH THE MONEY THE RECEPTIONIST TOLD US TO COME BACK IN 2 HOURS. SO WE CAME BACK HOME AND WENT BACK IN 1 1/2 HOURS. THEY WERE CLOSED AND IT WAS ABOUT 4 P.M. I WAS WORRYING SO I KNOCKED ON THE DOOR. THE RECEPTIONIST ANSWERED THE DOOR AND WE ASKED IF BOOTY WAS READY TO GO HOME. SHE SAID YES AND WENT TO GET HIM. I ASKED HER WHY HE ACTED LIKE HE DIDN'T EVEN KNOW US. HE WASN'T HAPPY TO SEE US. SHE SAID →

HE WAS TIRED FROM THE ENNEMA THEY GAVE HIM. ON THE WAY HOME I WAS TRYING TO GET BOOTY'S ATTENTION, I WOULD CALL HIS NAME AND HE WOULDN'T EVEN ACKNOWLEDGE ME OR LOOK AT ME. HE JUST KEPT LOOKING DOWN LIKE HE WAS ALL DRUGGED UP. THATS WHEN I FELT LIKE SOMETHING WAS WRONG WITH HIM. AFTER WE GOT HIM HOME WE CALLED CATALINA ANIMAL HOSPITAL BACK AND TOLD THEM WHAT WAS GOING ON WITH BOOTY. THEY SAID BRING HIM BACK FOR ANOTHER EXAM. AFTER THEY SAW HIM THEY TOLD US HE NEEDED X-RAYS AND BLOOD WORK. WE SAID WE ONLY HAVE ENOUGH MONEY FOR BLOOD WORK, BUT NOT ENOUGH FOR X-RAYS TOO. SO HE DID THE X-RAY HIMSELF AT FIRST HE SAID THAT HE THOUGHT BOOTY HAD A STROKE BUT THE X-RAY SHOWED HIS BACK WAS CRACKED. HE HAD NO BACK INJURY WHEN WE FIRST TOOK HIM THERE. IT PROBABLY HAPPENED WHEN THEY GAVE HIM AN ENNEMA AND BROKE HIS BACK WHEN THEY WERE HOLDING HIM DOWN. THEY SAID THEY DIDNT GIVE HIM ANYTHING TO RELAX HIM. HE WAS SCARED TO DEATH. THATS WHEN BONNIE HEARD HIM CRYING AND HOWLING. REAL LOUD. THATS WHEN THEY TOLD HER TO GET OUT. WHEN WE TOOK HIM BACK HOME HE JUST KEPT GETTING WORSE. I COULD TELL HE WAS SUFFERING. AFTER STAYING UP ALL NIGHT AND TRYING TO COMFORT HIM, WE DECIDED IT WAS BEST TO TAKE HIM TO THE HUMANE SOCIETY AND HAVE HIM PUT TO SLEEP.

PUTTING BOOTY TO SLEEP WAS THE HARDEST
THING I HAVE EVER DONE, ESPECIALLY WHEN
IT DIDN'T HAVE TO HAPPEN. WE HAVE TO HOLD
CATALINA ANIMAL HOSPITAL ACCOUNTABLE FOR THEIR
ACTIONS. THANKYOU FOR LISTENING TO US.

GOO BLESS

DARLENE HOVITT

To Who it may Concern

①

I can't believe I'm Here
With Arizona State Veterinary
Medical Examining Board
What happen to our dog Booty
Shouldn't Never happen

No one want to own the Crake back
or Spinal-cord injury that happen
to him on 3-15-2021 my Concern is
Someone is still Taking care
of Animals that shouldn't be
working with animals

my Concern is what about the
Next Animal that gets hurt.

I can't believe they didn't
give Booty anything to calm him
down while they gave him enema

I'm not a Veterinary or Doctor

but it seems like to me if I was

doing something that was going to dramatize
an animal like an enema I would give
him or her something to calm him down
before I gave them enema, They held

Booty down and Crake's back and
Spinal-cord that's why he was paralyzed

(2)

and couldn't move, That's why the
Veterinary took the XRAY OF
Booty himself to see what
they did to his back.

He was the one who wanted to
Take XRAY OF Booty back why is
That when we took him in for
enema, Booty was a healthy dog
He was having trouble that day
because he couldn't go to poop.

That's the only thing that was
wrong with him. So the Doctor
the Veterinary knew that they hurt
Booty that's why he gave him XRAY
so he could see what had happen
to Booty. Why would he paid for it
himself the XRAY. they need
to own what they did to him
so we will know what happen
to our dog that day

Daerlene Smith

~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~

3-18-21

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN: MY NAME IS
Dylan Nicks and I live over at Bonnie's house.
ON THE DAY IN QUESTION, BONNIE AND DARLENE
TOOK BOOTY TO THE VET BECAUSE HE WAS
HAVING A HARD TIME POOPING. To BONNIE AND
DARLENE TOOK BOOTY TO CATALINA ANIMAL
HOSPITAL. AFTER TAKING HIM BACK 2 MORE
TIMES AND 10 HRS LATER, BOOTY CAME HOME
LIKE A VEGETABLE ON LIFE SUPPORT. IT
DIDN'T HAVE TO HAPPEN THAT WAY, THEY MUST BE
HELD ACCOUNTABLE FOR THEIR ACTIONS AND
MISTAKES. THANKS, GOD BLESS

Dylan Nicks
Dylan Nicks

~~_____~~

3-18-21

THIS IS A STATEMENT ABOUT OUR DOG
BOOTY, WHO WAS PERFECTLY FINE
EXCEPT HE WAS HAVING A HARD TIME
HAVING BOWEL MOVEMENTS. AFTER
3 TRIPS BACK TO THE HOSPITAL AND
10 HRS LATER HE COULDN'T EVEN STAND
UP OR HOLD HIS HEAD UP. HE LOOKED
LIKE HE LOST HIS BEST FRIENDS. WHAT
EVER THEY DID, THEY ARE RESPONSIBLE
FOR HIS DEATH,



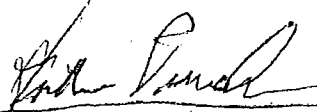
HELEN LOVITT

P.S. I DONT UNDERSTAND WHY WHEN
WE TOOK HIM IN HE WAS PLAYING
BALL WITH THE OTHER DOGS AND WHEN
THEY BROUGHT HIM HOME HE WAS
ALMOST DEAD.

3-18-21

My name is HATTIE PINEDA AND I AM
WRITING THIS STATEMENT ABOUT OUR DOG
BOOTY WHO HAD BEEN WITH US OVER 10 YEARS.
HE USED TO BE A SHOW DOG AND HAS WON
MANY A RIBBON. ANYWAYS, BOOTY WAS HAVING
A PROBLEM WITH GOING POOP. HE ACTED LIKE HE
WAS CONSTIPATED, SO BONNIE AND DARLENE TOOK
HIM TO CATALINA ANIMAL HOSPITAL TO GET
LOOKED AT THEY CAME BACK A COUPLE OF HOURS
LATER WITH BOOTY AND HE WAS SO MEDICATED HE
DIDNT KNOW WHO ANYBODY WAS AND HE WAS IN
SO MUCH PAIN, I COULDN'T BELIEVE IT. WHY?
A COUPLE MORE TRIPS BACK TO CATALINA BUT HE
JUST KEPT GETTING WORSE. HIS LAST NIGHT HERE
HE WAS IN SUCH PAIN HE COULDN'T EVEN MOVE.
WE HAD TO DO THE HUMANE THING AND END HIS
SUFFERING. CATALINA NEEDS TO BE HELD
ACCOUNTABLE FOR THEIR MISTAKES.

THANK YOU AND GOD BLESS.



HATTIE PINEDA



To Booty my friend

You no longer greet me,
As I walk through the door
You're not there to make me smile
To make me laugh any more
Life seems quite without you
You were far more than a pet,
You were a family member, a friend
A loving soul I'll never forget
I still listen for you and miss you
Every day you were a great companion,
Loyal and true. My heart will always
Wear your pawprints. I miss you
I miss our special walks together
I miss how happy you were when I
Came through the door. I miss giving
you your special treat when you would do
your trick for me. I miss holding you
and petting you. To let you know
How much I love you

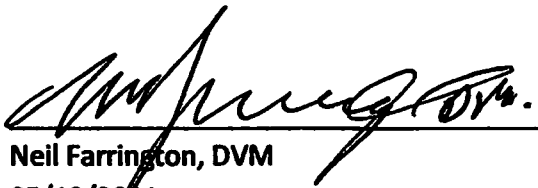
Re: 21-136

Neil Farrington, DVM
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

The pet was presented to me early in the afternoon of March 15, 2021, in serious condition. I was aware of a pet seen by Dr. Osterheld earlier that same day for an enema, yet I knew nothing about the case until the pet was presented to me in the afternoon.

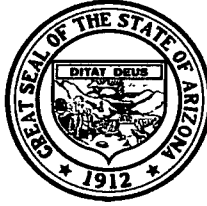
The owner agreed to laboratory tests and x-rays due to the seriousness of the situation, yet I was made aware that she had previously declined any testing. I believed that by the time the pet left our clinic he had begun to stabilize and was exhibiting more movement. The fact the owner did not have the resources to pursue additional care was a major contributor to this pet's demise.

In my experience, clients will always have fault with the DVM for wrongdoing if they never anticipated their pet would worsen after a veterinary exam. In this owner's mind, her pet had an easily treatable constipation issue which unfortunately was a 'ticking time bomb' symptom of a much more serious underlying condition.



Neil Farrington, DVM
05/19/2021

Douglas A. Ducey
- Governor -



Victoria Whitmore
- Executive Director -

ARIZONA STATE VETERINARY MEDICAL EXAMINING BOARD

1740 W. Adams Street, Ste. 4600, Phoenix, Arizona 85007
Phone (602) 364-1-PET (1738) & FAX (602) 364-1039
vetboard.az.gov

INVESTIGATIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

TO: Arizona State Veterinary Medical Examining Board

FROM: PM Investigative Committee: Adam Almaraz - Chair
Amrit Rai, DVM
Steven Dow, DVM - **Telephonic**
Gregg Maura - **Absent**

STAFF PRESENT: Tracy A. Riendeau, CVT – Investigations
Marc Harris – Assistant Attorney General

RE: Case: 21-136
Complainant(s): Darlene Lovitt/Bonnie Martin
Respondent(s): Neil Farrington, DVM (License: 1415)

SUMMARY:

Complaint Received at Board Office: 5/6/21
Committee Discussion: 10/5/21; 11/2/21
Board IIR: 12/8/21

APPLICABLE STATUTES AND RULES:

Laws as Amended August 2018
(Lime Green); Rules as Revised
September 2013 (Yellow)

On March 15, 2021, "Booty," a 12-year-old male Chihuahua was presented to Respondent's associate for constipation. Diagnostics were recommended but declined. Approval was obtained to administer the dog an enema and the dog was discharged.

Later that day, the dog was presented to Respondent non-responsive. The dog was hospitalized for treatment and diagnostics. Radiographs revealed collapse of L3-L4. The dog continued to worsen and referral to an emergency facility was recommended. Complainants declined and elected to take the dog home.

It was later reported that the dog had been humanely euthanized.

Complainant was noticed and appeared telephonically 10/5/21

Respondent was noticed and appeared telephonically 11/2/21; Dr. Osterheld appeared telephonically 11/2/21

The Committee reviewed medical records, testimony, and other documentation as described below:

- Complainant(s) narrative: *Darlene Lovitt/Bonnie Martin*
- Respondent(s) narrative/medical record: *Neil Farrington, DVM*

PROPOSED 'FINDINGS of FACT':

1. On March 15, 2021, the dog was presented to Respondent's associate, Dr. Osterheld, due to constipation. Complainants stated the dog only had one bowel movement in the past three days. It was also reported that the dog had a hard lump near the dog's anus and the dog was having breathing issues. There was no vomiting or diarrhea – possible polyuria and polydipsia – the dog was eating well, but Complainants were withholding food. The dog was reportedly somewhat lethargic.

2. Upon exam, the dog had a weight = 7.5 pounds, a temperature = 100.5 degrees, a heart rate = 140bpm, and a respiration rate = 30rpm. The dog was muzzled; abdominal palpation was noted as too tense and rectum was blocked with firm feces.

3. Diagnostics were recommended including blood work and radiographs which were declined. An enema was approved therefore the dog was administered one 12 cc Pet Enema and 50mLs of warm water and KY. The dog was discharged.

4. According to Complainants, they heard the dog vocalizing in pain while in the treatment area. When they took the dog home, he was lethargic and not very responsive.

5. Later that day around 1:20pm, Complainants brought the dog back with concerns that the dog's condition was worsening. Respondent evaluated the dog; the dog was non-responsive, with pale mucous membranes, delayed CRT, and weak pulses. The dog had a temperature = 94.5 degrees and a heart rate = 80bpm.

6. Respondent discussed the dog's condition with Complainants and recommended diagnostics to try to determine the cause of the dog's decline. Complainants had financial constraints.

7. The dog was hospitalized; an IV catheter was placed, LRS 150mLs were bolused then decreased to 5mL/kg/hr. The dog was supplied with a heat source and blood was collected for testing. The dog passed some semi-formed stool with blood, appeared painful and restless. The dog was administered meloxicam 5mg/mL – 0.14mL SQ and Polyflex 250mg/mL 0.5mL SQ. Blood work revealed the following abnormalities:

Glucose	147	70 – 143
Phos	2.1	2.5 – 6.8
ALT	232	10 -125
ALKP	13	23 – 212
Lipase	4663	200 – 1800
K	46	3.5 – 5.8
MCV	72.6	55.8 – 71.6
MCHC	30.4	30.9 – 38.6
Eos	0.05	0.10 – 1.49

8. At 3:00pm, Respondent noted that the dog was unable to stand, listless, and not responding to stimuli. There were no motor movements to the rear legs but deep pain was present. At this time radiographs were performed and revealed collapse of L3 – 4, an empty bowel and moderate amount of gas in the colon.

9. Respondent's differential diagnoses were acute tetraplegia with mental dullness secondary to cartilaginous emboli, neoplasia, infection, and other. He gave the dog a very guarded prognosis and recommended referral to an emergency facility for after hour care. Complainants were upset and uncertain on what to do – they insisted on taking the dog home. Respondent documented that the dog was semi-conscious but had increased head movement. The dog was administered dexamethasone SP 0.4mL SQ and was discharged. Respondent recommended taking the dog to an emergency facility if the dog seizes or worsens.

10. The following day, a message was left with Complainants to get an update on the dog.

11. On March 18, 2021, Complainants reported that the dog was humanely euthanized. Respondent's medical record shows discrepancies compared to the medical record Complainants submitted on this date.

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION:

The Committee discussed that they were not sure that they agreed with Respondent's assessment of the radiographs and wished he would have sent them out to be reviewed by a radiologist. Additionally, the Committee did not feel the dog's symptoms matched the radiograph findings of narrowing of the discs. Another concern was the discrepancy of the March 18th entry in the medical record – the medical records Complainant submitted differed from the medical records Respondent submitted.

The Committee further discussed that the dog was presented to Respondent's associate with what was presumed to be a simple constipation earlier in the day. Respondent saw the dog later in the day non-responsive. With respect to the radiographs, Respondent did the best he could with the information he had and maybe there was a positioning issue. He attempted to explain the seriousness of the dog's condition; however, Complainants were too upset to listen.

There were some communication issues with Complainant and a referral was made to take the dog to an emergency facility. With respect to the discrepancy in the medical record, the Committee further discussed that the discrepancy ultimately did not affect the outcome of the case. They could not confirm whether Respondent's staff made changes to the record or Complainant and her sister, as they had made other changes to the medical record.

COMMITTEE'S PROPOSED CONCLUSIONS of LAW:

The Committee concluded that no violations of the Veterinary Practice Act occurred.

COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDED DISPOSITION:

Motion: It was moved and seconded the Board:

Dismiss this issue with no violation.

Vote: The motion was approved with a vote of 2 to 1, with Dr. Rai opposed.

The information contained in this report was obtained from the case file, which includes the complaint, the respondent's response, any consulting veterinarian or witness input, and any other sources used to gather information for the investigation.

TR

Tracy A. Riendeau, CVT
Investigative Division